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The Deputy Director of Central Intelligence  
Washington, D.C. 20505

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23 December 1988

NOTE TO: Assistant to the President for  
National Security Affairs

SUBJECT: Libyan CW Plant at Rabta

Attached is a review of the evidence supporting  
our case that chemical weapons are being produced  
at Rabta. I think you will agree that, taken  
together, the evidence is convincing.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

*Bob.*

Robert M. Gates

Attachment:  
As Stated

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Central Intelligence Agency  
Office of the Deputy Director for Intelligence

25 November 1988

NOTE TO: Director of Central Intelligence  
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

The attached memo reviews the physical evidence that makes our analysts confident the Libyan chemical facility at Rabta is designed for military rather than civilian purposes.

An additional consideration is that Rabta is administratively linked to other Libyan military development programs. Rabta is controlled by the Tajura Nuclear Research Center, which not only is involved in the Libyan nuclear program but also [redacted]

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[redacted] includes a site for filling and storing chemical munitions. We also have evidence that the portion of the Rabta Technology Center that performs metal fabrication may have a role in Libya's surface-to-surface missile program and in the repair of armored vehicles.

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[redacted]  
Richard J. Kerr

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Deputy Director for Intelligence

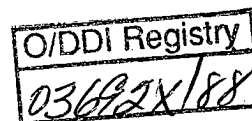
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25 NOV 1988



MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence  
VIA: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence  
FROM: Richard J. Kerr  
Deputy Director for Intelligence  
SUBJECT: Rabta Chemical Warfare (CW) Production  
Facility in Libya [REDACTED]

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1. Action: None. In reference to the questions raised by Lieutenant General Colin L. Powell at your meeting on November 17, 1988, the following information is provided:

a. We believe it unlikely that the chemical warfare production facility located at the Technology Center near Rabta was intended for a purpose other than chemical warfare (CW) agent production. The types of precursor chemicals and equipment at the site--when viewed in total--can indicate only CW agent, i.e., mustard and sarin, production. Any one of the precursor chemicals, by themselves, or the equipment on its own could be used to argue the point that the facility has a legitimate purpose. The precursor chemicals present at the plant could be used legitimately to manufacture pesticides and dyestuffs, but not pharmaceuticals, which the Libyans contend is its true purpose. However, we believe that the combination of the chemical warfare agent precursor chemicals present and the corrosion resistant equipment are indicative of CW agent production. In addition, the Rabta facility is over-designed to serve as a pharmaceutical plant. [REDACTED]

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b. Another strong indication of CW agent production is the security at the site which far exceeds that required for a commercial chemical plant. The site is guarded by Libyan soldiers, and specially coded badges are reportedly required for access. In terms of air defense, this is probably now the most heavily defended site in Libya. [REDACTED] there are SA-8, SA-6, SA-3 and SA-2 units, [REDACTED] antiaircraft artillery guns located nearby. In addition, the site is supported by SA-5s at Al' Azizyah. [REDACTED]

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SUBJECT: Rabta Chemical Warfare (CW) Production Facility  
in Libya

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c. Qadhafi traditionally has acquired more military equipment than his armed forces can absorb or use mainly because he views Libya as an arsenal to supply the Arab militaries in the next war against the Israelis. He also, we believe, values the prestige and intimidation factors that result from possessing a large, modern, sophisticated arsenal. We also believe that Qadhafi might sell or give chemical agents/munitions to an Arab country facing an immediate security threat if he believed doing so would greatly enhance Libyan influence with that government. It is unlikely, but still possible, that Qadhafi would supply a terrorist group with chemical agents because we believe he would view the risk of association with a chemical terrorist attack, and the danger of severe retaliation, as too great. Moreover, we believe Qadhafi is satisfied with the level of success his terrorist allies have achieved with conventional weapons. In either situation, Tripoli almost certainly would retain control over the use of such agents/munitions.

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2. If we can provide any further information please let us know.

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Richard J. Kerr  
Deputy Director for Intelligence

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SUBJECT: Rabta Chemical Warfare (CW) Production Facility  
In Libya

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(23 Nov 88)

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